

[1st April 1930]

Medical

Alleged compulsion of a nurse to undergo medical examination by a male doctor.

* 1715 Q.—Mr. J. A. DAVIS: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether a nurse (Miss Brown) in the General Hospital was forced to submit to a medical examination by a male medical officer; and

(b) whether she refused at first to be examined by a male medical officer and was forced to comply with the orders of the Superintendent, General Hospital?

A.—The Government have no information.

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO:—“Will the hon. Minister be pleased to get the information and satisfy himself as to whether there has been a case of that kind?”

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—“It is the practice in the hospitals to conduct medical examinations like this and therefore unless hon. Members say that there was something extraordinary in this case, there is no necessity to enquire. If the hon. Member gives more information, I shall enquire.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI:—“Ordinarily are women examined by male doctors?”

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—“I understand that at least in the women and children's hospitals objections are not raised to female patients being treated by male doctors.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI:—“Is it not suggested in the question that the woman in this case did not like it herself?”

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—“If there is any complaint naturally an enquiry might be made.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI:—“Now there is complaint, why should not the Government call for the information?”

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—“But the only question is whether the complaint is well-founded.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI:—“Why not the Government get information on a question to see whether the complaint is well-founded or not?”

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—“Hon. Members are giving information. We do not know what the facts are.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI:—“Basing their information on the facts supplied to them, hon. Members are entitled to ask questions and it is up to the hon. Ministers to make enquiries and refute the allegations?”

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—“If the hon. Member says that he has very reliable information on this question and he wants it to be verified. . . .”

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The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Order, order. There is no special undertaking necessary on the part of hon. Members who give notice of questions. The very fact that they have been permitted to put certain questions should be taken to mean that they have assumed the responsibility for them. I do not think therefore the Government Member is justified in saying that the hon. Member should further give an undertaking as to the correctness of the information furnished by him in the question."

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" I submit, Sir, that I did not say that the hon. Member should give an undertaking. What I said was that if the hon. Member says . . ."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" The very fact that he has put a question is enough for the Government to take notice of the facts alleged by him. They have no right to say that the hon. Member should give an undertaking."

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" I submit to your ruling, Mr. President. I did not say that the hon. Member should give an undertaking. But I may say that in some of the cases that we have examined, we have found that the questions have no basis whatever and that is why before making an investigation in regard to a question of this kind, we wish to know whether the hon. Member is really very anxious to get the information."

Dr. B. S. MALLAYYA :—" Will the hon. Minister be pleased to give instances of hon. Members having made wrong statements in the questions? "

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" If the hon. the President allows me, I shall give."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I do not think any such question arises now. I think Members of Government will not be justified in making general allegations against Members of the House to the effect that their statements have been found to be incorrect. If they are found incorrect, they must be brought to the notice of the President who, according to the rules, can then take necessary action for the breach of the Standing Order regarding the responsibility of Members for the statements of facts made by them in their questions. But no Member of the Government will be justified in making general allegations against the Members of the House."

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" If the hon. the President will permit me and if the hon. Member wants those allegations, I am prepared to place them on the table of the House."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" This is not the occasion."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—" May I know whether the hon. Minister will be pleased to call for the information? "

11-15
a.m.

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" I do not think the hon. Member has given any further information."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—" The information is the complaint."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" May I enquire whether the hon. Minister will call for the information and satisfy himself that these allegations are unfounded? "

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" I shall enquire into the matter."